'PROBLEMS' ARISE IN KENNEDY TALKS

Accord on Book Termed Not Likely Before Tomorrow

By DOUGLAS ROBINSON

Representatives of Harper & Row, Publishers, Inc., and the Kennedy family studied a revised manuscript of "The Death of a President" yesterday in an effort to reach agreement on the controversial book.

The negotiations yesterday, which followed a late night session on Friday, were halted early in the evening. No formal discussions were scheduled for today, a source said, but there was a possibility of some informal conversations.

In any event, it appeared there would be no settlement before tomorrow.

"Some problems have come up," the source said, "but with a degree of reasonableness on both sides it may be possible to get a settlement before Tuesday."

Justice Saul S. Streit of the State Supreme Court has scheduled a hearing for that day on Mrs. John F. Kennedy's lawsuit to block publication of William Manchester's book on the assassination of President Kennedy.

It was learned that the negotiations now under way were confined to Mrs. Kennedy's personal objections to some parts of the Manchester book.

"There are some political matters in the manuscript that bother us, but we're not going to do anything about them," a source close to the Kennedy family said.

Thus far in the negotiations, it was understood, the Harper & Row representatives have not said whether they would accept changes previously agreed to by Look magazine, which plans a 60,000-word serialization of the book that will start in the issue on sale Jan. 10.

"On the other hand," one source said, "they haven't said they wouldn't accept them, either."

"We have some difficulties that still have to be ironed out," he said. "Some may not be settled, in which case we'll have a lawsuit."

Some Difficulties Remain

Harper & Row has said it will publish the 300,000-word book next April.

The parts of the book that Mrs. Kennedy apparently objects to are mainly scenes that she considers private and without historical importance.

The Kennedy family, for example, is said to have taken exception to Mr. Manchester's descriptions of how Mrs. Kennedy touched her husband's body in the Dallas hospital where he had been taken after being shot.

The manuscript is also reported to include the texts of letters that Mrs. Kennedy and her daughter, Caroline, placed in the President's coffin. And it is also reported to include a conversation that Mr. and Mrs. Kennedy had in their bedroom the night before the assassination.

The intimate material was obtained by Mr. Manchester in 10 hours of taped interviews with Mrs. Kennedy. Her friends have said that she made no attempt at self-censorship in the interviews and revealed her deepest thoughts.

Violation of Rights Charged

Although Mrs. Kennedy had previously authorized the Manchester book in the interest of "accuracy, good taste and dignity," her lawsuit contended that the author had violated her rights by planning to have the manuscript published without Kennedy family approval.

Mrs. Kennedy, her close friends say, has not read the book. Several persons who hold the trust of the Kennedy family, however, were asked to study the manuscript and suggest changes.

Named as defendants in Mrs. Kennedy's court suit were Mr. Manchester, Harper & Row and Cowles Communications, Inc., the publishers of Look magazine, which had agreed to pay $665,000 for serialization rights.

Last week, after intensive negotiations between representatives of Look and the Kennedy family, the magazine agreed to remove or modify all passages relating to the personal life of Mrs. Kennedy and her children.

None of the excised material, a spokesman for Mrs. Kennedy said after the Look settlement, concerned any passages about President Johnson.

Persons who have read the manuscript have said it contains an unflattering picture of Mr. Johnson and speaks of hostility that the Kennedy family is reported to have felt toward him.

The Defense

For his part, Mr. Manchester has defended his work on the ground that President Kennedy, as a historian, "would have wanted his countrymen to know the truth of those terrible days."

"John Kennedy was my President," Mr. Manchester said in a statement last week. "To suggest that I would dishonor his memory or my association with him is both cruel and unjust."

Under terms of the Look settlement, the magazine assumed responsibility for anything that might appear in the foreign serialization of "The Death of a President." Rights to this serialization had already been sold by Look to several European publications.

New difficulties in this area arose yesterday when the Geillustreerde Pers Publishing Company of Amsterdam said it planned to publish "without changes" the original manuscript received from Look.

The concern, which publishes the weekly magazine Revue in the Netherlands, thus took the same position as that of the West German magazine Stern, which has also said it would use the uncut version.